

**BIRDSONG, GEORGE LAWRENCE
FORSYTHE, 1821-1869.**
George Lawrence Forsythe Birdsong papers, 1834-1933

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Birdsong, George Lawrence Forsythe, 1821-1869.
Title: George Lawrence Forsythe Birdsong papers, 1834-1933
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 200
Extent: .75 linear feet (2 boxes), 1 oversized papers box (OP), and 2 bound volumes (BV)
Abstract: Papers of Georgia plantation owner, huntsman and writer George Lawrence Forsythe Birdsong from 1834-1933.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

Source

Gift of Charles Birdsong, 1966.

Custodial History

The donor is the great-grandson of George Lawrence Forsythe Birdsong.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], George Lawrence Forsythe Birdsong papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Appraisal Note

Acquired as part of the Rose Library's holdings in Georgia history.

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Collection Description

Biographical Note

George Lawrence Forsythe Birdsong, Georgia plantation owner, huntsman and writer, was born February 25, the son of Benajah and Assa Ann Reese Birdsong. His cotton plantation was located ten miles south of Thomaston, Georgia in the Bellwood community. Here he engaged in hunting and the breeding of dogs and game chickens. He developed the famous Birdsong fox hounds which were predecessors of the July and Trigg breeds. Under the name "Larry" his articles and stories on dogs and hunting were published regularly by Joseph Addison Turner in *The Countryman* during 1863 and 1864. After the Civil War some articles were published in *Turf, Field, and Farm*.

Birdsong was Captain in command of the Upson County Guards when that unit was mustered for duty during the war, but his duties as Sheriff forced his resignation from that position. He then became Captain of the Upson Reserve Unit. He was also very active in church and Masonic affairs.

On November 28, 1839, Birdsong married Susan Frances Thweatt, daughter of Thomas and Katherine Hamil Thweatt. George Pressley, their first son, was born May 25, 1841. They had several other children one of whom, Henry Payette, was the grandfather of the donor. George L. F. Birdsong died August 18, 1869 after a long illness.

Scope and Content Note

The greater portion of the collection consists of 430 letters written between 1834 and 1875. Most are to G. L. F. Birdsong from correspondents ranging throughout the country and concern breeding and hunting with fox dogs. The most frequent correspondent, Thomas Y. Henry, gave Birdsong his first stock of the dogs which would later bear his name. Madison Kilpatrick, H. C. Trim and Amos E. Ward were also dog breeders of note who corresponded frequently with Birdsong. Letters written by William H. Bisdee and James T. Gee concern the breeding and fighting of game cocks. Family and plantation life are only incidentally mentioned in the correspondence.

The collection also contains: a ledger-type commonplace book with notes dealing with dogs, business receipts, quotations and poetry verses, as well as first drafts of several articles; loose sheets with drafts of articles; addresses given at Masonic meetings; poetry; news clippings; hunting magazines; and other miscellaneous printed matter.

Arrangement Note

Arranged by record type.

Container List

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	Correspondence, 1843-1850
1	2	Correspondence, 1850-1855
1	3	Correspondence, 1856-1859
1	4	Correspondence, 1860-1861
1	5	Correspondence, 1862-1864
1	6	Correspondence, 1865-1866
1	7	Correspondence, January- June, 1867
1	8	Correspondence, July- December, 1867
1	9	Correspondence, January- April, 1868
1	10	Correspondence, May- August, 1868
1	11	Correspondence, September- December, 1868
1	12	Correspondence, January- April, 1869
1	13	Correspondence, May- December, 1869
1	14	Correspondence, 1870-1875, 1886
1	15	Correspondence, undated and fragments
2	1	Clippings, <i>The Red Ranger</i> , May 1933; <i>The Hunter's Horn</i> , Feb. 1930; <i>The Countryman</i> , vol. 14, no. 1; <i>History of the Capitol Question</i> ; <i>Baltimore, Price-Current Lettersheet</i> , Nov. 3, 1866, Feb. 16, 1867, Sept. 1868; Rules of the Pit; business cards; and advertisements
2	2	Miscellaneous, wooden plaque with the initials B. R. B.; a book of G.L. F. Birdsong's check stubs for the years 1858-1859; and a hand drawn map of an unidentified area
2	3	Notebooks: two commonplace books containing notes on children's lessons, verses, quotation, dog's records, and rough drafts of articles
2	4	Writings: poetry; masonic addresses; rough drafts for magazine articles; receipts, and court records
BV1		Nimrod's Hunting Tours, v. II, Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, and Blanchard, 1836
BV2		"Dinks," <i>The Sportsman's Vade Mecum</i> . Frank Forester, ed. New York: Stringer and Townsend, 1850.
OP1	1	Crane's phrenological chart for Henry F. Birdsong; two genealogical charts for dogs; news article on "Georgia's Famous July Dogs"
